

NEWTOWN SQUARE — On Sunday, March 9, Congressman Joe Sestak (D-PA) visited the Edmont Reserve Center, where he met with members of the United States Army Reserve Transportation Company 233rd and their families as well as other government officials and officers from the United States Army as a part of the 223rd Transportation Company Award Ceremony and Reunion.

"I am proud to be with the members of the 223rd and their families tonight," said Congressman Sestak. "During my 31 years in the Navy, I served along side members from all branches of the military and am proud to be here tonight with members of this decorated Company. I am honored to be here to present these awards to Col. Skow, LTC Scioli, and CSM Santiago, along with all of the other members of the 223rd Transportation Company who served in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom."

During the period from August 2004 until July 2005, the 223rd Transportation Company served in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The unit served as the primary bulk fuel transporter for the eastern half of Multi-National Force West's area of operations, covering over three Iraqi provinces in support of Army brigades and two Marine regimental combat teams. The Company helped to transport over 21 million gallons of fuel and the company was a critical part in the fight against terrorism.

During the active duty, the company lost two of its heroic, exceptional members, Pfc. Luis Perez and Staff Sgt James Pettaway in 2004.

"Pfc Perez and Staff Sgt Pettaway demonstrated the "dignity of danger" ...in a common cause where there is a higher purpose to life than oneself. There is a painting that hangs in the Pentagon that depicts a serviceman with his family in church. Clearly, he is praying before a deployment and long separation. Below the painting is a quote from Isaiah in which God asks, "Whom shall I send; who will go for us?" And Isaiah replies, "Here am I; send me." Every veteran has said, "Here am I...America...send me," said Congressman Sestak. "These two remarkable individuals paid the ultimate sacrifice to protect our freedom, liberties, and ideals. And today we thank them again for their service to our nation."

The 223rd Transportation Company was originally constituted in November 1942. The company was commended for its service in Europe during World War II. In 1979, the 223rd

Transportation Company was assigned to Edgmont, Pennsylvania and then moved to Norristown, Pennsylvania in 2002. Following their returning from active duty, the Company reverted to reserve status with location at Newtown Square, Pennsylvania.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.

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